

## **Museum and Cultural Advisory Board - Meeting Minutes**

The Museum and Cultural Advisory Board met in a regular meeting at the Mesa Arts Center, One East Main Street, third floor, south Studios conference room, on November 29, 2012.

### **Members Present:**

Nancy Aposhian	Wesley Ringle
Joe Cooper	Karina Wilhelm
Merlin Ellis	Peggy Wilson
Lars Nielson, Jr.	Alyssa Yingling

### **Members Absent:**

Vincent DiBella  
Dr. Robbi D. Venditti

### **Staff Present:**

Cindy Ornstein	Rob Schultz
Sunnee O'Rork	Billy Jones
Randy Vogel	Jean Kaminski

Lars Nielson, Jr., Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

### **Approval of Minutes:**

Lars Nielson, Jr., Chair, called for any corrections/additions/deletions to the minutes of September 27. Karina Wilhelm noted that she has lived in Mesa for 1.7 years, not 17 years as transcribed. Peggy Wilson made a motion to approve the minutes of September 27 with the correction made, Nancy Aposhian seconded, and the Board members present unanimously approved the September 27 minutes. They will be posted on the City's website.

**Public Comments:** No members of the public were present.

### **Introduce Interim Assistant to the City Manager, John Meza – Cindy Ornstein**

John Meza is the third in rotation to serve as Interim Assistant to the City Manager, and will be in the position through December 2012. Mr. Meza shared that he has been with the Police Department for over 26 years and has seen the growth Mesa has experienced. He has worked as a patrol officer, detective, SWAT, and was a member of the first gang unit in the '90s. From that experience, he learned arts and culture assist with crime prevention. To reach kids, he learned to rap in presenting his material to hold their attention. For six years, he served as assistant police chief. Currently he serves as Executive Officer & Assistant to the Chief of Police and oversees the business/administration of the Department.

Mr. Meza said he has thoroughly enjoyed his time overseeing the Arts and Culture Department saying it has been a life-refresher for him seeing the positive impact Mesa Arts Center (MAC) has on Mesa's citizens. He is impressed with the talented staff at MAC and the Museums (Arizona Museum of Natural History and Arizona Museum for Youth). At the recent Mesa Stat meeting when City Manager Chris Brady asked Cindy Ornstein what is your main mission, Mr. Meza liked her response - to transform and enrich lives.

Mr. Meza thanked the Board members for serving as arts and culture advisors to the Mayor and City Council and as advocates for arts and culture.

### **Overview of Classes/Camps/Workshops – Billy Jones**

Billy Jones has worked for Mesa Arts Center (MAC) since 1986, beginning as a drama teacher. MAC started in 1980 at 55 E. Main Street and was then called the Mesa Arts and Cultural Program. MAC expanded in 1985 to include performing arts and officially changed to Mesa Arts Center in 1994.

Mr. Jones began acting at Mesa Arts Center in 1983 and currently serves as the full time Arts Education Coordinator.

Mr. Jones brought samples of work done in the Studios – jewelry, glass blowing and framework (beads), ceramics, drawing, and painting. His samples sparked interest in when the next session of classes/workshops would be offered again. Mr. Jones reported that the spring brochure will be coming out next week – registration begins December 7. MAC offers over 400 classes a year in 14 state-of-the-art Studios that include jewelry, lapidary, sculpting, welding, printmaking, painting, drawing, ceramics, glass blowing, glass framework, dance, drama, music, and acting. He invited the Board to come and check out the one-hour "Studio Samplers" (\$5) during "spark! Mesa's Festival of Creativity" in the spring.

Mr. Jones offered a tour of the Studios to anyone who is interested – just give him a call.

MAC also offers workshops for groups that want to schedule an activity – Mesa Leadership Training and Development will be doing just that on December 7. They will have an hour of enameling, an hour of glass frameworking, and an hour watching a ceramic demonstration.

Cindy Ornstein mentioned that several years ago we had a reduction in workforce during which all full-time performing arts instructors were laid off. This meant we had to work with adjunct instructors, which makes it harder to rebuild a program

when there is not a long-term relationship built between teachers and students. MAC is building new partnerships to build that consistency. Conder Dance has partnered with MAC in the dance Studio. Two summers ago we had a special drama camp with East Valley Children's Theatre and they are returning this summer. MAC continues to look for ways to build partnerships that enhance our programs and support non-profit organizations. Mr. Jones added that there is an improv troupe that uses our Acting Studio once a month and the director of that troupe is teaching improv classes for MAC. Mr. Jones is also bringing back the Teen Arts Program this summer. Many of MAC's former summer campers have graduated out of the program due to age limits and are looking for more. The Teen Program focuses on performance and they will have a performance opportunity at the end of the Program. Summer Camps became very popular so MAC started a spring break camp and then added a fall and winter break camp. Summer Camp is open from 6:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. and averages \$40/day. They take classes in drama, dance, puppetry, music, and visual arts throughout the day. In the summer, MAC partners with the Library for a free concert series once a week attended by MAC campers, and each child gets to visit each Museum once during the summer. He also showed a teepee of origami birds made at summer camp. Mandy Buscas uses it in her Education Outreach Program as an example of what students can do.

Peggy Wilson was looking at Arizona's Governor's Arts Awards and noticed that Mesa Arts Center had won in the past and asked if it was for education. Cindy Ornstein replied that MAC won the Community Organization Award in 1994, and MAC would be eligible for that award again or an education award.

Nancy Aposhian asked how we hire our teachers. Mr. Jones said that sometimes we put out a call for artists and sometimes through word of mouth. If anyone knows of a good instructor who would be interested, he/she can contact Billy Jones.

## **Staff Reports**

### Arizona Museum for Youth (AMY) – Sunnee O'Rork

- The Museum opened a new prototype traveling exhibition, "Healthy Pets, Healthy Me!" at the Adelante Healthcare facility on Main Street, which uses activities from the "Extreme Pets" exhibition. The exhibit is there until mid-February. The Museum hired Barry Sparkman as the Traveling Exhibit Coordinator. He will evaluate the exhibit at Adelante Healthcare, and he is preparing a survey to determine what next year's traveling exhibit might be. Traveling exhibits were research through Sunnee O'Rork's 2010 Piper Fellowship. For launching of traveling exhibitions, the Museum received \$25,000 from Steele Foundation as a capstone grant of to meet the goal of \$100,000 in revenue for the project (\$25,000 from Steele, \$25,000 from City of Mesa, and \$50,000 in an organizational enhancement grant from the Piper Trust as a follow-up to the Piper fellowship).
- AMY's education team hosted a Teacher Preview Evening for "Show Me the Money."
- ArtZone has added, "Quilling is Fun!"
- Dr. Ruth Tan Lim was voted on to the Friends Board.
- The Museum participates in rental of their facility to outside organizations and cooperates with other City Departments for use of the facility, as does MAC and the Arizona Museum of Natural History. AMY hosted the East Valley Children's Theater's annual fundraising event and K-12 Virtual Academy's Night of Talent event. The City's Engineering Department is looking to use AMY for one of their events.

### Arizona Museum of Natural History (AzMNH) – Rob Schultz for Tom Wilson

- Mesa Grande is moving forward nicely – construction of the visitor's center is expected to be completed around December 8; grand opening will be coming soon. This project has been in the works for a long time, and it is exciting for the Museum staff to see it come to fruition.
- The Museum will open, in collaboration with NASA, "Destination Station" on December 21, an exhibition in the upstairs gallery about the International Space Station. Cindy Ornstein added that the Hubble Telescope exhibition and the International Space Station exhibition have been loaned by NASA to the Museum free of charge.

### Mesa Arts Center/Mesa Contemporary Arts (MAC – MCA) – Rob Schultz

- A temporary Public Art project will be installed at Mesa Arts Center (MAC) in late January. This is part of the In Flux Valley-wide project, a consortium of seven Valley cities (Mesa, Tempe, Scottsdale, Roosevelt Row District, Glendale, Goodyear, and Chandler) and their Public Arts Programs to provide opportunities for artists to install temporary art projects in vacant storefronts. The project at MAC will be a fabric art piece by artist Moira Geoffrion and displayed for six – eight months in one of the theater lobby windows. MAC hopes to participate in the In Flux project again next year. This provides great exposure for the artist, enhances the spaces where artwork is displayed, and begins a revival of the department's Public Art Program. Mesa's Public Art funding was reduced to zero in 2006, and has not been restored to-date.
- Arts & Culture staff met with Benedictine University staff to discuss how Benedictine might take advantage of MAC's Studio spaces. There may be interest in Benedictine doing something similar to the relationship Mesa Community

College (MCC) had with MAC several years ago – offer for-credit classes using MAC teachers, classroom, equipment, registration, etc. The Benedictine partnership will likely begin with a rental agreement for the use of studio spaces; discussion continues. Nancy Aposhian asked if it would be possible to have someone from Benedictine University come to a Board meeting to present the University programs. Cindy Ornstein said she would check into that.

- MAC provided a tour of our facility to Wilkes University. Following the tour, Wilkes' administrator met with MAC staff to discuss a potential collaboration. We are looking at some literary workshops through their graduate program in Creative Writing that they would offer and present in our Studios or Mesa Contemporary Arts' (MCA) Dobson Lecture Hall.
- Americans for the Arts, the national arts advocacy and service organization, consists of over 5,000 members and has a number of Advisory Councils. Rob Schultz was elected to the Arts Education Council two years ago. There is an annual convention in June and a winter meeting. This year, the Council will meet at MAC February 5 – 7. There are 15 members on the Council and they represent different types of arts education organizations from higher education to local arts agencies. Cindy Ornstein asked if there would be time to tour them while they are here. Mr. Schultz replied that they do like site visits and he would incorporate a tour into the agenda.
- Three of the MCA glass shows are still up, the De la Torre brothers exhibition came down on November 6. Staff is installing "The National Collage Society" exhibition in that gallery to open December 14.
- The Bob Carey photography exhibition will be up through December 2.
- MCA is hosting preliminary competition rounds for a Poetry Slam this evening in the courtyard from 5:30 – 7:00 p.m. Friday, Unity Day, there will be over 90 youth participating in Poetry, Hip Hop, and Spoken Word workshops, and on Friday night from 5:15 – 7:00 p.m., there will be a Valley-wide competition in the All City Slam in the Piper Theater. The events are free and open to the public; Cindy Ornstein is one of the judges for the competition.

#### Theaters & Operations (MAC) – Randy Vogel

- Staff is working on an RFP for a new ticketing system. As our organization continues to grow, the current system is not adequate. An RFP will go out in February.
- The Jazz from A – Z Program, a partnership between Jazz at Lincoln Center, MAC, ASU, and MPS, trains teachers how to teach American history through the history of jazz. The program recently received a grant from NEA for \$58,000. Next week, two jazz artists from Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra are coming to Mesa to work with students at Red Mountain High School, Mesa High School Jazz Band, Skyline High School, and Young Sounds. This is to help them prepare for the Essentially Ellington Regional Festival.
- The season is going well; more pop shows are planned and things that would help to build education and community outreach were added.
- Mr. Vogel continues to add shows and marketing is working on a winter brochure. Bonnie Raitt is added for February 17; American's Got Talent featuring 2012 and 2011 winners along with six former American's Got Talent winners with Jerry Springer as guest host; Jim Henson's Pajanimals are coming in May; partnering with Phoenix Symphony, the MAC is presenting George Benson in January and Audra McDonald in late March. Audra McDonald is a five time Tony award winning, Emmy nominated actor, singer, and currently on TV's "Private Practice." Next season The Tenors (formerly the Canadian Tenors) will return, in partnership with PBS.
- Currently working on FY 13-14 programming and planning to announce the Classical Series in the spring. Mr. Vogel commented that the artists coming are going to be exciting.
- Operations – two staff/techs/touring company restrooms are being added back stage. MAC is extremely appreciative to the Mesa Arts Alliance for funding this project. There is also a plan to install an Alliance Pavilion on the Shadow Walk over the cistern, primarily funded by the Alliance.
- Randy Vogel was appointed as chair of the International Crowd Management Committee for IAVM (International Association of Venue Managers), a committee that specializes in crowd management and guest services for venues around the country.
- Mr. Vogel will monitor a panel at the Performing Arts Managers conference in November 2013, and will give a presentation on in-house presenting and partnering and discuss why people do it and the risk involved in doing it.

#### **Director's Report—Cindy Ornstein**

Cindy Ornstein and others in MAC leadership met with the Dean of Students at ASU Polytechnic to explore potential opportunities for combining forces to provide cultural programming for the students and build new audiences at the same time. MAC staff will brainstorm with students and faculty to get their input on what they would like to see in the cultural life of their campus and how MAC might act as a resource, catalyst and program provider.

Artspace, the national non-profit developer of spaces for artists, visited Mesa. The visit went well, and they were impressed with the community, leadership, and interest in providing artists spaces within the community. We are waiting for their feasibility study and Ms. Ornstein believes they will recommend moving to the next step, which is a market study.

That would involve a survey of artists and arts organizations throughout the Valley to ascertain their needs. Artspace creates, develops, and manages the spaces and rents them at below market rates. If successful, this exciting project would help further Mesa's environment of creativity and innovation, and support the growing revitalization of downtown Mesa. JP Morgan Chase underwrote the feasibility study. The market study is costly and we are planning to approach partners and funders who may have an interest in supporting the project.

Cindy Ornstein submitted a letter of inquiry to Artplace (a national granting organization consisting of a consortium of foundation and federal agency funders) for \$575,000. The project would place interactive art platforms in a café environment at the north end of the Shadow Walk. We will hear back from ArtPlace in January. If we make the first cut, the next step would be to submit a full grant proposal. The larger plan also includes creating an open plaza and a new stage at the north end of the Shadow Walk.

There are several exciting development projects happening on 1<sup>st</sup> Ave.; construction has begun on the Encore housing for low income seniors; The Barry and Betty Goldwater Archive Library; Urban Garden; and First Methodist Church is planning to open a coffee house on the corner of Sirrine and 1<sup>st</sup> Ave.

Merlin Ellis asked what MAC's relationship is with Heritage Academy. Cindy Ornstein stated that they have rented spaces from us for performances, and we have a good relationship with them. Randy Vogel added that they are participating in the Jazz from A – Z Program this year. Mr. Ellis commented that a few weeks ago there was an issue at a City Council meeting regarding the proposal for a new Entertainment District in downtown Mesa and Heritage Academy opposed it because of restrictions regarding bars within 300 feet of a school or church. He was not able to attend, but questioned why they opposed. Ms. Ornstein replied that the restriction does not exist for government licenses or for restaurants, but the new rules would enable bars, pubs, and liquor stores to apply for a license within the formerly restricted areas. The Heritage Academy felt these establishments could breed undesirable behaviors. The City received mostly positive feedback on the new District, and is putting a Good Neighbor Policy into action to prevent unwanted behavior, and the Police will be closely engaged in monitoring activity. Many others spoke in favor of an Entertainment District at the Council Meeting. Council did pass the proposal, with a 7-0 vote.

#### **Report on Conferences and/or meetings/Performances Attended: Board Members – Information only**

Merlin Ellis noted that at times, the marquees are difficult to read, either the font is too small or the colors tend to blend. Peggy Wilson said she has also experienced them difficult to read at times. Randy Vogel will check into this and make any necessary adjustments.

Nancy Aposhian reported that she and her son attended the Metro Light Rail event in October. She also attended the Goldwater Library announcement and found them very enlightening and interesting.

Peggy Wilson reported she attended the most recent open house at Arizona Museum for Youth, as well as Tutu Tuesday at Mesa Arts Center; Empty Bowls; Roy Track Memorial Pow Wow; Dia de Los Muertos event, and a Ballet Folklorico performance.

Wes Ringle attended the Halloween fundraising event in downtown Mesa on October 27, put on by Monsterland.

Alyssa reported she attended Dia de Los Muertos and the Asian American Festival. She loves sitting up close to the performers, the outside environment, and just kicking back on a Sunday afternoon. She told a story of her 11-year-old friend who is totally into Disney channel and pop music. She attended the Earth Sounds school show with R. Carlos Nakai and was "totally" blown away. She declared it the most awesome and wonderful thing she ever heard in her life.

Merlin Ellis also attended Earth Sounds and was surprised and delighted, especially by the Mongolian music.

The next scheduled meeting date is January 24, 2013, 4 p.m.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Cindy Ornstein, Director  
Arts and Culture Department